United Nations A/64/420/Add.4

General Assembly

Distr.: General
4 December 2009

Original: English

Sixty-fourth session
Agenda item 53 (d)

Sustainable development: protection of global climate for present and future generations

Report of the Second Committee*

Rapporteur: Ms. Denise **McQuade** (Ireland)

I. Introduction

1. The Second Committee held a substantive debate on agenda item 53 (see A/64/420). Action on sub-item (d) was taken at the 36th and 39th meetings, on 19 November and 4 December 2009. An account of the Committee's consideration of the sub-item is contained in the relevant summary records (A/C.2/64/SR.36 and 39).

II. Consideration of draft resolutions A/C.2/64/L.39 and A/C.2/64/L.54

2. At the 36th meeting, on 19 November, the representative of the Sudan, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Protection of global climate for present and future generations" (A/C.2/64/L.39), which read:

> "*The General Assembly*,
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> "*Recalling* its resolutions 43/53 of 6 December 1988, 54/222 of 22 December 1999, 62/86 of 10 December 2007 and 63/32 of 26 November 2008 and other resolutions and decisions relating to the protection of the global climate for present and future generations of mankind,
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> "*Recalling also* the provisions of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, including the acknowledgement that the global nature of climate change calls for the widest possible cooperation by all

* The report of the Committee on this item is being issued in 10 parts, under the symbol A/64/420 and Add.1-9.

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countries and their participation in an effective and appropriate international response, in accordance with their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities and their social and economic conditions,

"*Noting* that the largest share of historical and current global emissions of greenhouse gases has originated in developed countries, that per capita emissions in developing countries are still relatively low and that the share of global emissions originating in developing countries will grow to meet their social and development needs,

"*Recalling* the United Nations Millennium Declaration, in which Heads of State and Government resolved to make every effort to ensure the entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol and to embark on the required reduction in emissions of greenhouse gases,

"*Recalling also* the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development, the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development ('Johannesburg Plan of Implementation'), the outcome of the thirteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention and the third session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, held in Bali, Indonesia, from 3 to 15 December 2007, the outcome of the fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention and the fourth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, held in Poznan, Poland, from 1 to 12 December 2008, and the outcomes of all previous sessions,

"*Reaffirming* the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, the Mauritius Declaration and the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States,

"*Recalling* the 2005 World Summit Outcome,

"*Remaining deeply concerned* that all developing countries, including the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing States, countries in Africa and other developing countries, face increased risks from the adverse effects of climate change, and stressing the need to address adaptation needs relating to such effects,

"*Noting* that, to date, there are one hundred and ninety-two parties to the Convention, including one hundred and ninety-one States and one regional economic integration organization,

"*Noting also* that, currently, the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change has attracted one hundred and eighty-four ratifications, accessions, acceptances or approvals, including by thirty-nine parties included in annex I to the Convention,

"*Noting further* the amendment to annex B to the Kyoto Protocol,

"*Noting* the work of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the need to build and enhance scientific and technological capabilities, inter alia, through continuing support to the Panel for the exchange of scientific data and information, especially in developing countries,

"*Noting also* the significance of the scientific findings of the fourth assessment report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, providing an integrated scientific, technical and socio-economic perspective on relevant issues and contributing positively to the discussions under the Convention and the understanding of the phenomenon of climate change, including its impacts and risks,

"*Reaffirming* that economic and social development and poverty eradication are global priorities,

"*Recognizing* that deep cuts in global emissions will be required to achieve the ultimate objective of the Convention,

"*Reaffirming its commitment* to the ultimate objective of the Convention, namely, to stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that prevents dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system, and reaffirming that such a level should be achieved within a time frame sufficient to allow ecosystems to adapt naturally to climate change, to ensure that food production is not threatened and to enable economic development to proceed in a sustainable manner,

"*Taking note* of the initiative of the Secretary-General in convening a Summit on Climate Change on 22 September 2009,

"*Taking note* of the holding of the third World Climate Conference at Geneva from 31 August to 4 September 2009, and the holding by the Government of Indonesia of the World Ocean Conference at Manado from 11 to 15 May 2009,

"*Acknowledging* women as key actors in the efforts towards sustainable development, and recognizing that a gender perspective can contribute to efforts to address climate change,

"*Taking note* of the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,

"1. *Stresses* the seriousness of climate change, and calls upon States to work cooperatively towards achieving the ultimate objective of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change through the urgent implementation of its provisions;

"2. *Notes* that States that have ratified the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change welcome the entry into force of the Protocol on 16 February 2005 and strongly urge States that have not yet done so to ratify it in a timely manner;

"3. *Takes note* of the outcome of the fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention and the fourth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, hosted by the Government of Poland from 1 to 12 December 2008;

"4. *Calls for* urgent global action to address climate change in accordance with the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities;

"5. *Also calls for* the expeditious completion of the ongoing parallel work of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Further Commitments for Annex I

Parties under the Kyoto Protocol and the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention towards reaching an ambitious and equitable agreed outcome under the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action and adopting an amendment to annex B to the Kyoto Protocol for subsequent commitment periods that reflects ambitious and enhanced commitments for annex I countries;

"6. *Urges* developed countries to undertake ambitious and enhanced commitments under the Kyoto Protocol in subsequent commitment periods, and also urges the international community, as part of its commitments to developing countries, to address the consequences of climate change, in particular through new, additional and predictable financial resources, capacity-building and access to and transfer of technology;

"7. *Takes note with appreciation* of the offer of the Government of Denmark to host the fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties and the fifth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, to be held in Copenhagen from 7 to 18 December 2009;

"8. *Also takes note with appreciation*, in this regard, of the offer of the Government of Mexico to host the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties and the sixth session of the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, to be held in Mexico City in 2010;

"9. *Urges* parties to the Convention, and invites parties to the Kyoto Protocol, to continue to make use of the information contained in the fourth assessment report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in their work;

"10. *Recognizes* that climate change poses serious risks and challenges to all countries, particularly to developing countries, especially the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing States and countries in Africa, including those that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change, and calls upon States to take urgent global action to address climate change in accordance with the principles identified in the Convention, including the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, and, in this regard, urges all countries to fully implement their commitments under the Convention, to take effective and concrete actions and measures at all levels, and to enhance international cooperation in the framework of the Convention;

"11. *Reaffirms* that efforts to address climate change in a manner that enhances the sustainable development and sustained economic growth of the developing countries and the eradication of poverty should be carried out through promoting the integration of the three components of sustainable development, namely, economic development, social development and environmental protection, as interdependent and mutually reinforcing pillars, in an integrated, coordinated and balanced manner;

"12. *Recognizes* the urgency of providing new, additional and predictable financial and technical resources, as well as capacity-building and access to and transfer of technology, to assist those developing countries adversely affected by climate change;

"13. *Takes note* of the High-Level Conference on Climate Change: Technology Development and Transfer, held in New Delhi on 22 and 23 October 2009;

"14. *Calls upon* the international community to fulfil the commitments made during the fifth replenishment of the Global Environment Facility Trust Fund, without prejudice to ongoing discussions on financial mechanisms under the Convention;

"15. *Calls upon* all annex I countries to fulfil their financial obligations under the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol;

"16. *Requests* the Secretary-General to make provisions for the sessions of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention and its subsidiary bodies in his proposal for the programme budget for the biennium 2010-2011;

"17. *Notes* the ongoing work of the liaison group of the secretariats and offices of the relevant subsidiary bodies of the Framework Convention, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa, and the Convention on Biological Diversity, and encourages cooperation to promote complementarities among the three secretariats while respecting their independent legal status;

"18. *Invites* the conferences of the parties to the multilateral environmental conventions, when setting the dates of their meetings, to take into consideration the schedule of meetings of the General Assembly and the Commission on Sustainable Development so as to ensure the adequate representation of developing countries at those meetings;

"19. *Invites* the secretariat of the Framework Convention to report, through the Secretary-General, to the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session on the work of the Conference of the Parties;

"20. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-fifth session the sub-item entitled 'Protection of global climate for present and future generations of humankind'."

3. At its 39th meeting, on 4 December, the Committee had before it a draft resolution entitled "Protection of global climate for present and future generations of humankind" (A/C.2/64/L.54), submitted by the Rapporteur of the Committee, Denise McQuade (Ireland), on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolution A/C.2/64/L.39.

4. At the same meeting, upon the proposal of the Chairperson, the Committee agreed to waive rule 120 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly and proceed to take action on draft resolution A/C.2/64/L.54.

5. Also at the same meeting, the Secretary of the Committee read out a statement of programme budget implications prepared by the Secretariat on draft resolution A/C.2/64/L.54 in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly.

6. Also at the 39th meeting, the Rapporteur of the Committee corrected operative paragraph 6 of the draft resolution to read:

"6. *Encourages* Member States to approach Copenhagen with ambition, optimism and determination, with a view to making the United Nations Climate Change Conference a success".

7. Also at its 39th meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.2/64/L.54, as orally corrected (see para. 10).

8. After the adoption of the draft resolution, statements were made by the representatives of Peru, the United States of America, Sweden (on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the European Union), the Sudan (on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China) and Colombia (see A/C.2/64/SR.39).

9. In the light of the adoption of draft resolution A/C.2/64/L.54, draft resolution A/C.2/64/L.39 was withdrawn by its sponsors.

III. Recommendation of the Second Committee

10. The Second Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Protection of global climate for present and future generations of humankind

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 43/53 of 6 December 1988, 54/222 of 22 December 1999, 62/86 of 10 December 2007, 63/32 of 26 November 2008 and resolutions and decisions relating to the protection of the global climate for present and future generations of mankind,

Recalling also the provisions of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,[1] including the acknowledgement that the global nature of climate change calls for the widest possible cooperation by all countries and their participation in an effective and appropriate international response, in accordance with their common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities and their social and economic conditions,

Recalling further the United Nations Millennium Declaration, in which Heads of State and Government resolved to make every effort to ensure the entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change[2] and to embark on the required reduction in emissions of greenhouse gases,[3]

Recalling the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development,[4] the Plan of Implementation of the World Summit on Sustainable Development ("Johannesburg Plan of Implementation"),[5] the outcome of the thirteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention and the third session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, held in Bali, Indonesia, from 3 to 15 December 2007,[6] the outcome of the fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention and the fourth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, held in Poznan, Poland, from 1 to 12 December 2008,[7] and the outcomes of all previous sessions,

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[1] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1771, No. 30822.

[2] Ibid., vol. 2303, No. 30822.

[3] Resolution 55/2, para. 23.

[4] *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa, 26 August-4 September 2002* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.03.II.A.1 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

[5] Ibid., resolution 2, annex.

[6] FCCC/CP/2007/6/Add.1 and 2 and FCCC/KP/CMP/2007/9/Add.1 and 2.

[7] FCCC/CP/2008/7 and Add.1 and FCCC/KP/CMP/2008/11 and Add.1 and 2.

Reaffirming the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States,[8] the Mauritius Declaration[9] and the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States,[10]

Recalling the 2005 World Summit Outcome,[11]

Remaining deeply concerned that all countries, in particular developing countries, including the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing States and countries in Africa, face increased risks from the adverse effects of climate change, and stressing the need to address adaptation needs relating to such effects,

Noting that, to date, there are one hundred and ninety-four parties to the Convention, including one hundred and ninety-three States and one regional economic integration organization,

Noting also that, currently, the Kyoto Protocol to the Framework Convention has attracted one hundred and ninety ratifications, accessions, acceptances or approvals, including by thirty-nine parties included in annex I to the Convention,

Noting further the amendment to annex B to the Kyoto Protocol,[12]

Noting the work of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the need to build and enhance scientific and technological capabilities, inter alia, through continuing support to the Panel for the exchange of scientific data and information, especially in developing countries,

Noting also the significance of the scientific findings of the fourth assessment report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, providing an integrated scientific, technical and socio-economic perspective on relevant issues and contributing positively to the discussions under the Convention and the understanding of the phenomenon of climate change, including its impacts and risks,

Reaffirming that economic and social development and poverty eradication are global priorities,

Recognizing that deep cuts in global emissions will be required to achieve the ultimate objective of the Convention,

Reaffirming its commitment to the ultimate objective of the Convention, namely, to stabilize greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that prevents dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system, and also reaffirming that such a level should be achieved within a time frame sufficient to allow ecosystems to adapt naturally to climate change, to ensure that food

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[8] *Report of the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Bridgetown, Barbados, 25 April-6 May 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.94.I.18 and corrigenda), chap. I, resolution 1, annex II.

[9] *Report of the International Meeting to Review the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, Port Louis, Mauritius, 10-14 January 2005* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.05.II.A.4 and corrigendum), chap. I, resolution 1, annex I.

[10] Ibid., annex II.

[11] See resolution 60/1.

[12] FCCC/KP/CMP/2006/10/Add.1, decision 10/CMP.2.

production is not threatened and to enable economic development to proceed in a sustainable manner,

Reaffirming the financial obligations of developed country parties and other developed country parties included in annex II under the Convention and the Kyoto Protocol,

Taking note of the initiative by the Secretary-General in convening a summit on climate change on 22 September, and welcoming the determination reiterated by Member States on that occasion to urgently address the challenge of climate change,

Taking note also of the holding of World Climate Conference 3 in Geneva from 31 August to 4 September 2009 and the holding by the Government of Indonesia of the World Ocean Conference in Manado from 11 to 15 May 2009,

Taking note further of the high-level conference on "Climate Change: Technology Development and Transfer", held in New Delhi on 22 and 23 October 2009,

Acknowledging women as key actors in the efforts towards sustainable development, and recognizing that a gender perspective can contribute to efforts to address climate change,

Taking note of the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,[13]

1. *Stresses* the seriousness of climate change, and calls upon States to work cooperatively towards achieving the ultimate objective of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change[1] through the urgent implementation of its provisions;

2. *Notes* that States that have ratified the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change[2] welcome the entry into force of the Protocol on 16 February 2005 and strongly urge States that have not yet done so to ratify it in a timely manner;

3. *Takes note* of the outcome of the fourteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention and the fourth session of the Conference of the Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, hosted by the Government of Poland from 1 to 12 December 2008;[3]

4. *Takes note with appreciation* of the offer of the Government of Denmark to host the fifteenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention and the fifth session of the Conference of Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties to the Kyoto Protocol, to be held in Copenhagen from 7 to 18 December 2009;

5. *Notes* the ongoing parallel work of the Ad Hoc Working Group on Long-term Cooperative Action under the Convention and the Ad Hoc Working Group on Further Commitments for Annex I Parties under the Kyoto Protocol, and that the respective parties to the Convention and its Kyoto Protocol call for the completion of this work;

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[13] See A/64/202, chap. I.

6. *Encourages* Member States to approach Copenhagen with ambition, optimism and determination, with a view to making the United Nations Copenhagen Climate Change Conference a success;

7. *Takes note with appreciation*, in this regard, of the offer of the Government of Mexico to host the sixteenth session of the Conference of the Parties and the sixth session of the Conference of Parties serving as the Meeting of the Parties, to be held in Mexico City in 2010;[14]

8. *Urges* parties to the Convention, and invites parties to the Kyoto Protocol to the Framework Convention, to continue to make use of the information contained in the fourth assessment report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in their work;

9. *Recognizes* that climate change poses serious risks and challenges to all countries, particularly to developing countries, especially the least developed countries, landlocked developing countries, small island developing States and countries in Africa, including those that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change, and calls upon States to take urgent global action to address climate change in accordance with the principles identified in the Convention, including the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, and, in this regard, urges all countries to fully implement their commitments under the Convention, to take effective and concrete actions and measures at all levels and to enhance international cooperation in the framework of the Convention;

10. *Reaffirms* that efforts to address climate change in a manner that enhances the sustainable development and sustained economic growth of the developing countries and the eradication of poverty should be carried out through promoting the integration of the three components of sustainable development, namely, economic development, social development and environmental protection, as interdependent and mutually reinforcing pillars, in an integrated, coordinated and balanced manner;

11. *Recognizes* the urgency of providing financial and technical resources, as well as capacity-building and access to and transfer of technology, to assist those developing countries adversely affected by climate change;

12. *Invites* the international community to fulfil the commitments made during the fourth replenishment and to secure a successful fifth replenishment of the Global Environment Facility Trust Fund, without prejudice to ongoing discussions on financial mechanisms under the Convention;

13. *Requests* the Secretary-General to make provisions for the sessions of the Conference of the Parties to the Framework Convention and its subsidiary bodies in his proposal for the programme budget for the biennium 2010-2011;

14. *Notes* the ongoing work of the liaison group of the secretariats and offices of the relevant subsidiary bodies of the Framework Convention, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification in Those Countries Experiencing Serious Drought and/or Desertification, Particularly in Africa,[15] and the Convention

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[14] Dates to be confirmed.

[15] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1954, No. 33480.

on Biological Diversity,[16] and encourages close cooperation to promote complementarities among the three secretariats while respecting their independent legal status;

15. *Invites* the conferences of the parties to the multilateral environmental conventions, when setting the dates of their meetings, to take into consideration the schedule of meetings of the General Assembly and the Commission on Sustainable Development so as to ensure the adequate representation of developing countries at those meetings;

16. *Invites* the secretariat of the Framework Convention to report, through the Secretary-General, to the General Assembly at its sixty-fifth session on the work of the Conference of the Parties;

17. *Decides* to include in the provisional agenda of its sixty-fifth session the sub-item entitled "Protection of global climate for present and future generations of humankind".

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[16] Ibid., vol. 1760, No. 30619.